

WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL
520 E. CASCADE AVE., 8:00 A.M.
JULY 19, 2007

COUNCIL PRESENT:

Brad Boyd	Mayor
Bill Merrill	Council President
Lon Kellstrom	Councilor
Sharlene Weed	Councilor
Shawna Bell	Councilor

STAFF PRESENT:

Brian Rankin	Planning Director
Lisa Young	Finance Director
Brad Grimm	Public Works Director
Kathy Nelson	City Recorder

ABSENT:

Eileen Stein	City Manager
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The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Mayor Boyd.

1. Flood Plain Code Update

Planning Director Rankin stated that he would be providing an overview of the Flood Plain Code update that will include the adoption of two new ordinances. He stated he is providing background information to the Council to help the Council understand the context and that he would present the draft ordinances to the Planning Commission in the evening.

Director Rankin stated the City must update local codes to adopt a new FEMA Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) prior to September 28th or be removed from the National Flood Insurance Program. He stated the program allows citizens to purchase flood insurance. He stated the reasons for the necessary changes are a mix of science and policy. He directed the Council to the handout of the power point presentation entitled *Whychus Creek Flood Plain: Comprehensive Plan and Development Code Update* (copy attached).

Director Rankin provided a summary of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and its policies. He stated that an audit by the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCDD) revealed the City is not in compliance with NFIP requirements and that staff has noticed problems with current policies. He stated staff attempted to resolve the issues without a major policy shift.

Director Rankin stated there are a number of environmental factors contributing to a need to update the flood plain policy. He stated that Whychus Creek is the only river in the region that is fed by surface water as opposed to other rivers that are ground fed. He stated that Whychus Creek is aggrading, meaning that more sediment is deposited than transported downstream, causing problems such as erosion, braiding and formation of gravel bars.

Director Rankin stated that Carver Lake presents a unique flood risk to Sisters in that there is a 1-5% chance each year that the lake could catastrophically empty with a flood magnitude about five

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times that of a 100 year flood. He stated that if the glacial moraine that acts as a natural dam to the lake were to fail, flood peaks would reach Sisters within 30 minutes. He stated that additional urbanization of Sisters along Whychus Creek, along with erosion, also contributes to potential high water events. He stated that people's efforts to protect their own property often put their neighbor's property at risk.

Director Rankin stated that the new policy will still allow people to develop their properties but will increase public safety by having people build outside the flood plain areas, elevate versus fill, move new and reconstructed homes away from the creek, add erosion control standards, create new lots outside the flood plain, allow neighbors to participate in decisions affecting flood risk and incorporating Federal standards and DLCDC requirements so the City can continue to participate in the NFIP.

Director Rankin provided a summary of the changes to the Comprehensive Plan policies and Development Code policies. He stated the Council will need to adopt the two new ordinances to make the necessary changes after a 45 day public notice provision has been observed. He stated that a review by DLCDC shows that its requirements have been met with the proposed changes.

Councilor Weed asked what the changes will mean to people living in the flood plain. **Director Rankin** stated that a homeowner's insurance company will require the purchase of flood insurance if a home falls in the flood plain. He added that if a home is not in the flood plain but is near the creek, a homeowner can elect to purchase flood insurance and probably should.

Councilor Bell asked if the present code prevents placement of cement riprap along the stream bank. **Director Rankin** stated it is prohibited. **Councilor Bell** asked if the City can enforce having the riprap removed. **Director Rankin** stated that if the City became aware of anyone dumping illegal riprap he would recommend calling the Division of State Lands as its enforcement provisions are to a higher standard than the City's. He stated the City could also begin its own code enforcement and fine process. He stated a larger management plan from a public safety angle needs to be devised. **Mayor Boyd** stated that at present there are no allowable measures to stop stream bank erosion but with the new codes there will be specific preventative measures a property owner can take.

Councilor Bell asked if there is a public emergency notification system in place in case of an emergency flood event arising from Craver Lake. **Director Rankin** stated that there is not a system in place at present but it would be relatively easy to have a sensor gauge installed to alert the City to the failing of the Carver Lake glacial moraine or a significant rain on snow event. He stated it could provide an automated notification system to citizens if evacuation is necessary. He stated an emergency notification system from Deschutes County is in place but not the sensor.

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2. Preview July 26, 2007 Regular Meeting and Urban Renewal Agency Agenda

City Recorder Nelson provided an overview of the agenda for the Urban Renewal Agency Board and Regular City Council meetings scheduled for July 26th. **Mayor Boyd** asked that Ordinance 371 and Ordinance 372 be pulled from the draft agenda of the regular meeting and moved to the August 23rd regular meeting since it would not be possible to adopt the ordinances till after August 14th in order to observe the required public notice time.

3. City Manager Update

Director Rankin, Acting City Manager stated he had researched the airport overlay and zoning requirements as it relates to the possible relocation of Gutenberg College. He stated that one half of the Multnomah Publishing building, the one being considered to house the college, does not meet the standards for public assembly or a school according to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) because the building falls in the flight approach to the airport. He added that he had not been contacted by Gutenberg College.

Mayor Boyd stated he had received numerous calls from citizens regarding the possible relocation of the college. He stated it is not up to the Council to determine who comes to Sisters but rather up to the business, in this case the college, to determine if the City works for their business model, adding that the City can not spot zone for any business. He stated it appears there are huge hurdles with the property the college has initially considered but that there is commercial land available if the college wants to build its own campus. **Councilor Merrill**, who attended the orientation meeting held in Sisters by Gutenberg College, stated that presently students at the college live in dorms and he believes that is the intent if the college relocates to Sisters. He stated the college had emphasized that it likes its current location on the campus of the University of Oregon in Eugene, because of the cultural opportunities and interaction of its students with University of Oregon students. He stated the college needs to decide for itself if relocating to Sisters will work. **Mayor Boyd** stated that the public assembly limitations within the airport overlay zone is a serious issue the college will need to address if it decides to relocate to Sisters. **Councilor Kellstrom** questioned why if the building is legally allowed to be full of adults, it can not house a school. He felt perhaps the City should research if students at a college would fall under the same restrictions.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Nelson, City Recorder

Brad Boyd, Mayor